

OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE
PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS, ONLINE COMMENTS,
AND INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS
As of December 21, 2015

OVERALL

- Develop overarching vision/goal
- Identify 1992 OTN SAP goals in a variety of Advisory Group working materials

PLANNING, DESIGN & LAND USE

Opportunities

- Respect 1992 OTN SAP
- Promote existing scale of residential property/human scale
- Provide mixed development/urban village/thoughtful features
- Further promote OTN's sense of community
- Provide varied architecture
- Promote livability
- Incorporate Eco District targets in all land use redevelopment projects
- Utilize open smart growth concept
- Emphasize on streetscape improvements such as green canopies (including in front of businesses), street lighting, sidewalks and street corners

Related Comments or Challenges

- Ensure flexibility within land use and related policies
- Allow taller buildings for art on ground floor
- Avoid creating shallow canyons through height
- Do not allow SUPs and DSUPs for increased building heights and parking reductions
- Require adequate parking for new construction
- Consider that CRMUX zoning is not intended to substitute high density development on sites designated for low and moderate housing (1992 OTN SAP)
- Respect intent of the RM zone under the 1992 OTN SAP
- Be mindful of setback requirements
- Place ABC store in another community
- Policymakers' direction on new redevelopment/development projects is important
- Promote mixed use and unique development opportunities on an appropriate site(s) to help brand OTN in a major and infinite manner, and to maximize the area's proximity to water
- Review with community and if and as appropriate update design guidelines

TRANSPORTATION

Opportunities

- Promote accessibility
- Promote public transit
- Promote walkability
- Improve Fairfax Street – wider sidewalks, better grading, more stop signs
- Improve connectivity between Marina Towers, Parkway and Old Town
- Strengthen transit/bicycle/pedestrian links to Metro
- Bring back historic trolley, with use of rail tracks and connect to Potomac Yard, Braddock and Old Town (create a trolley loop for residents and visitors between these neighborhoods)
- Promote and protect Washington Street as Gateway (Washington Street Standards)

Related Comments or Challenges

- Identify when traffic studies will be done
- A traffic study should occur before a change of one-way streets
- Need to have proper community representation when discussing idea of extending Royal and Fairfax Streets, and the idea of possibly converting Canal Way and other parking lots into parks and/or other uses.
- Study railroad easements on private properties
- Use existing grade crossing at Slaters Lane for vehicles/future bike and trolley
- Build complete streets with separate bicycle and pedestrian paths that are safer to cyclists, pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.
- Do not allow SUPs and DSUPs for parking reductions
- Explore parking policies that are visitor friendly
- Examine opportunity for appropriately located transit hub to support possible new n/s and e/w rail/trolley/shuttle routes for connectivity in and out of Old Town North and to accommodate motor coach parking in order that passengers can transfer to the new rail/trolley/shuttle services for local access.

HOUSING

Opportunities

- Support diverse population
- Acknowledge benefits of maintaining moderate income housing
- Disperse some ARHA sites to new construction throughout neighborhood

Related Comments or Challenges

- Consider energy efficiency as part of affordable housing redevelopment
- Study public easements through private properties with proper community and HOA representation
- Explore proportion of rental housing to homeownership

INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Opportunities

- Include an Eco District and Measures
- Expand the tree canopy and use permeable materials for better storm water management
- Explore research and development of new methodologies related to the environment

Related Comments or Challenges

- Bury electrical wires
- Consider concern about electromagnetic fields from lines
- Consider existing substation and future expansion and possibility of substation needs shrinking overtime
- Look at environmental impacts from new construction such as debris, dust and traffic
- Ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place before new developments are built
- Consider low carbon and alternative fuel vehicles and infrastructure under Eco-district

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Opportunities

- Create linear park and extend to Potomac Yard with outdoor shelters and paths
- Connect walkway to Daingerfield Island and leverage opportunity for Daingerfield Master Plan, working with NPS
- Include community facilities, educational facilities and public safety
- Include a visitors/hospitality center
- Provide kayak launch (Waterfront Plan)
- Utilize Montgomery Park as a community anchor (hub); expand Montgomery Park and improve its aesthetic beauty
- Protect the Art League school annex space as a cultural resource and economic generator
- Explore the creation of an “Art Block” with affordable spaces for artists and galleries
- Support Montgomery Park dog park and explore a new one on an appropriate development site
- Create a Norfolk and Western Heritage Trail
- Improve access to the Waterfront
- Include green space in the north

Related Comments or Challenges

- Recognize that the City’s Montgomery Park Neighborhood Plan is flexible so, if necessary, the park plan can be brought back and updated as the vision for the OTN SAP Update evolves and is implemented
- Preserve open space that is not surrounded by tall buildings to allow views to the sky
- Contact railroad and begin discussions asap
- Do not extend grid northward; transform to green space
- One riverside street only; no grid
- Follow curvilinear path but do not force it
- A grid is in character with Old Town
- Consider alternative locations to Port Royal Parking Lot for art related uses.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Opportunities

- Maintain neighborhood authenticity by preserving, integrating and celebrating historic/archaeological resources
- Make history part of the plan. Interpret history of area such as canal, springs, industry (Porters Brewery, glass factory), railroads, etc.
- Utilize appropriate and varied architecture
- Allow modern architecture

Related Comments or Challenges

- Industrial architecture may not always be right
- Use red brick

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities

- Support and increase small businesses and retail establishments
- Strengthen St. Asaph and Montgomery Streets as retail centers
- Include Broadband
- Carefully focus and target retail sites
- Maximize proximity to Metro, biking, and walking as an economic tool
- Neighborhood does not need any more hair salons, nail salons, and dry cleaners

IMPLEMENTATION

Opportunities

- Start thinking about implementation including measures
- Parkland over Canal Place has been studied; not pursued during earlier planning effort for several reasons; maybe look at another development that is yet to be built
- Use barges to haul construction debris and minimize traffic impacts from construction
- Manage impacts from dust on homes, ventilation systems, plants/gardens